Minutes of the

Meeting of the Executive Committee

of the

World Council of Churches

14 February 2005

Meeting held at the

Ecumenical Centre, Geneva, Switzerland

These minutes have no official status until received, amended as necessary and approved by the Executive Committee at its next meeting. The official proceedings of the Executive Committee consist of a documented record of decisions taken by the Committee along with the texts of documents acted upon. The introductions to agenda items and summaries of presentations and discussions are prepared by the minute-taker for background information only, and should not be cited as part of the official proceedings of the meeting nor as such attributed to the speakers' names.

World Council of Churches
150 Route de Ferney
P.O. Box 2100
CH-1211 Geneva 2
Switzerland

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1. OPENING ACTIONS

1.1 Worship

Opening worship took place in the Chapel of the Ecumenical Centre. Mr John Doom preached on Ezekiel 36: 26-27.

1.2 Call to order and welcome

The Moderator, His Holiness Aram I, called the meeting to order at 9.25am. He welcomed committee members to the meeting and thanked Mr Doom for his sermon. He assured Mr Doom that the WCC was with the people of the Pacific in their struggle towards responsible democracy. Later in the meeting he gave a particular welcome to Dr Bernice Powell Jackson, the new North America President.

1.3 Roll call

The General Secretary added his welcome to the Moderator's and called the roll. There would be some late arrivals. Apologies for absence had been received from Revd Iteffa Gobena, the Very Revd Leonid Kishkovsky, Ms Jana Krajciriková, Bishop McKinley Young, and Revd Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere, for whom Mr John Doom was appointed as substitute.

1.4 Remarks from the members

Ms Carmencita Karagdag, in mentioning the tsunami that had struck Asia on 26 December 2004, spoke of the immense outpouring of the human spirit from churches and agencies that had resulted. She spoke also of her concern at the withdrawal of North Korea from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Dr Kang Moon Kyu also spoke of the concern of South Korea at that withdrawal.

HH Aram I spoke of recent developments in the Middle East.

1.5 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held in Seoul, Korea, 24-27 August 2004 had been previously circulated. The following amendment was approved:
p. 13, lines 4 and 5 to read: 'Ms Carmencita Karagdag thanked the General Secretary for his visit to Asia.'

The Minutes were **approved** as amended.

1.6 Adoption of agenda and timetable

The General Secretary presented a proposed agenda and timetable. It was a short one-day meeting, the agendas for the sub-committees were not heavy and so one session for the sub-committees would be sufficient. The Executive Committee **approved** the agenda and timetable.

1.7 Appointment of sub-committees

The Executive Committee **approved** the membership of the Assembly, Staffing and Nominations, and Finance Sub-Committees (see Appendix II).

2. REPORT OF THE MODERTOR

The Moderator gave an introduction to the report that he was to give the following day to the Central Committee.

[Note. A summary of the Moderator's Report is given in the Minutes of the subsequent Central Committee meeting, and the full text appears in *The Ecumenical Review,* vol. 57, no. 2, April 2005.]

Discussion

Bishop Rolf Koppe requested that reference be made to the recent meetings of the Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation and the General Council of

the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. The Moderator agreed to the request.

Archbishop Nifon requested that the work of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation be mentioned as a contribution to reconciliation. The Moderator indicated that the Special Commission was mentioned in the General Secretary's Report, and that he himself would mention it in his report to the Assembly.

Dr Samuel Lee remarked that the previous meeting had had a discussion on the different characters of the Moderator's Report and that of the General Secretary. The Moderator's report was more of a reflection than an actual report. The Moderator, in response, said that the two reports represented a deliberate attempt at division of labour: Moderator's reports were thematic, whereas those of the General Secretary were on the work and witness of the WCC. This could be changed after the Assembly.

Metropolitan Gennadios observed that the same division of labour could apply to the commissions and their moderators' and directors' reports. He felt that the Moderator's Report would give rise to lively discussion in the Central Committee.

The Moderator thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their remarks.

3. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

At the invitation of the Moderator, the General Secretary gave a brief overview of the report he was to give the following day to the Central Committee. He observed that it would be his first report to the Central Committee and the last General Secretary's report to the present Central Committee.

[Note. A summary of the General Secretary's Report is given in the Minutes

of the subsequent Central Committee meeting and the full text appears in *The Ecumenical Review,* vol. 57, no. 2, April 2005.]

Discussion

The Moderator commented on how the General Secretary's Report complemented the Moderator's Report.

Bishop Koppe, commenting on the encounters with the Bretton Woods institutions, asked if there was a plan for continuing the encounters.

The General Secretary, responding, stated that the dialogue would continue, but informed by concrete experiences on the ground in the form of case studies, such as the EED case study on Honduras, as mentioned in his report (para. 36). There would be further case studies on Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The Moderator thanked the General Secretary for his introduction to his report.

4. PUBLIC ISSUES

Dr Marion Best, presiding, invited Mr Peter Weiderud to present a report on Public Issues.

Mr Weiderud reported that, since the previous meeting of the Executive Committee, there had been a period of intense activity. As regards the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel, there were many accompaniers and four new executive staff: Mr Jonathan Frerichs, Mr Rifat Kassis (the EAPPI international coordinator in Geneva), Ms Harmina Damons (the local EAPPI coordinator) and Rev. Chris Ferguson, JEC.

He gave an overview of other situations and proposed to the Executive Committee that they recommend to the Central Committee that Statements be made on Iraq, on the International Criminal Court, on Human Rights and Languages of Indigenous Peoples, and on Uprooted People. He presented drafts of these Statements and commented particularly on Iraq. The problem of Iraq would not be solved by the recent elections. The WCC had not spoken on Iraq since the 2003 Central Committee and it was now timely for a further statement to be made.

Dr Best invited comments on the draft Statements.

Bishop Koppe asked for further information on the situation of Christians in Iraq and requested that the Public Issues Committee discuss it.

Mr Frerichs, responding, said that 30,000 Christians had fled Iraq, mostly to Syria, and also to Jordan. Those who had fled included leading members of the community. Christians in Iraq were particularly vulnerable and the disorder in Iraq was of great concern.

Metropolitan Gennadios further commented that many Iraqi Christians – Roman Catholic, Syrian and Coptic Orthodox – were coming to Turkey.

The Moderator, referring to the Appendix 'Practicing Hospitality in an Era of New Forms of Migration' to the draft Statement on Uprooted People, commented that hospitality was a much wider issue. It belonged not only to the area of Public Issues, but also to Faith and Order, Dialogue, and Diakonia.

The General Secretary agreed that further work needed to be done on the theme of hospitality. It was also being taken up in the area of Religious Plurality.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that Statements be made on Iraq, on the International Criminal Court, on Human Rights and Languages of Indigenous People, and on Uprooted People.

5. PREPARATIONS FOR THE SUBSEQUENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee had before them, for information, the draft report From Harare to Porto Alegre and the Report on the Pre-Assembly Programme Evaluation. Both reports were being discussed by the Programme Committee of the Central Committee, at present meeting, and would appear in its report to the Central Committee.

5.1 Introduction to consensus procedures

Mr Georges Lemopoulos outlined the plans for initiating the Central Committee in the consensus procedures as contained in the new Rule XVI. There would be three facilitators present to help familiarize the Central Committee with the procedures: Rev. Dr D'Arcy Wood, Ms Anne Glynn-Mackoul and Dr Janice Love.

On the first morning of the Central Committee meeting the facilitators would introduce the consensus procedures. The intention was that the Central Committee should operate according to the new Rule XVI before its final adoption. That would take place towards the end of the meeting so that the Central Committee would bring its experience of working under the Rule to its formal decision to adopt it.

In the course of the meeting there would be evening training sessions in consensus procedures for moderators of committees, boards, commissions and advisory groups.

It would be important during the meeting to indicate at the beginning of each session the category of that session (general, hearing or decision) and to mark any shift of category.

On the last two days of the Central Committee meeting, the reports from committees would be dealt with in decision sessions following the consensus

method and Policy Reference Committee III was expected to propose that the new Rule XVI be adopted. The vote on its adoption would be according to the present Rules.

5.2 Sub-committees of the Central Committee

The General Secretary outlined the tasks of the committees of the Central Committee. Policy Reference Committee II on this occasion would deal exclusively with Assembly matters.

6. WORK IN PROGRESS

The General Secretary gave details of some work in progress to the Executive Committee.

6.1 Religious plurality and Christian self-understanding

The General Secretary had referred to this work in his report to the previous Executive Committee meeting (Minutes, p.12). The drafting group, drawing together work by Faith and Order, CWME and Inter-Religious Dialogue, had now produced the document that was before the committee. It would be presented at a hearing at the Central Committee, from which it was hoped further insights would arise. The document, in revised form, would be presented to the Assembly as a document entitled 'Christian Witness and Religious Plurality'.

6.2 Enhancing cooperation in the field of diakonia and development

A consultation had taken place at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, 4-5 February 2005. It had been convened by the WCC out of a concern to achieve coordination in the field of diakonia and development between the growing number of bodies active in these areas.

A group of agencies/specialized ministries had met in Copenhagen at the end of 2004 and had decided to work towards a global coalition of ecumenical relief and development agencies. Some agencies, not included in that group, had expressed concern to the WCC at what they perceived to be a dangerous and divisive trend that would result in lack of coordination. The General Secretary had thus taken the initiative to call this wider consultation.

The Executive Committee had before them, for information, the Opening Remarks by the General Secretary and the Statement produced by the consultation. The gratifying result of the consultation had been that, out of the proliferation of agencies and groups of agencies, there would now be one single coordinating instrument for relief and development. The coherence of the ecumenical movement in the field of diakonia and development had thus been assured.

Discussion

The Moderator, noting that this was the first time that the Executive Committee had heard of these developments, commented that this was a vital area of work that needed to be coordinated, the process should be encouraged and the General Secretary was to be commended on his initiative. The WCC, as a council of churches, was not one of the agencies/specialized ministries, but it did have a specific leadership role.

Dr Best remarked that this was a development with huge implications. Relief and development were important, but she would also stress the need for advocacy.

Ms Karagdag felt it to be important that the WCC maintain its leadership role to avoid the risk of the agencies/specialized ministries determining the course of the ecumenical movement.

The Moderator, in conclusion, proposed that: (i) the next Officers' Meeting discuss this development, and, in particular, the role of the WCC within it; and

(ii) that the issue appear as an item on the agenda of the next Executive Committee meeting.

The Executive Committee **agreed** with the Moderator's proposals.

7. MEMBERSHIP, STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS

7.1 Amendments to the Constitution and Rules

Mr Georges Lemopoulos introduced items requiring action by the Executive Committee.

7.1 (a) Article II of the Constitution

There was proposed new wording for Article II of the Constitution. There were only slight amendments made to the wording approved by the Central Committee in 2003 (Minutes, p. 124) in the light of comments since made.

The matter was referred to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee.

7.1 (b) Article I of the Rules

Member churches had been consulted on the amendment to Rule I as approved by the Central Committee in 2003 (Minutes, pp. 125-29).

Two reservations had been made by member churches that needed to be recorded as expressions of serious concern. There had been a creative plurality of views among churches' responses on these matters, a fact that had led to the conclusion that these two issues, rather than influencing the final wording of the Rules, should be recorded as constituting permanent concerns of the whole fellowship. The two issues were:

a) The size of member churches: while a few member churches had opposed raising the minimum size for membership from

25,000 to 50,000 members, others had agreed and hoped that smaller churches would form federations for joint membership.

b) The proposed theological criteria: again, while a few member churches had expressed serious objections to the theological and ecclesial criteria for membership, others felt that these objections might not necessarily be representative of all member churches belonging to the same tradition.

Discussion

There was further discussion on Article I of the Rules.

The Moderator enquired what the position of the Special Commission was.

Mr Lemopoulos, responding, stated that the proposals had the full support of the Steering Committee of the Special Commission, who were urging the Council to proceed.

Metropolitan Gennadios asked for clarification on the criterion of a minimum membership of 50,000. Who would check this? Also, regarding a group of churches seeking joint membership, this would presuppose a common theological understanding. Would the WCC have a role there?

Bishop Jabez Bryce enquired about churches in small nations that could not possibly fulfil the requirement of size.

Dr Kirkpatrick, on the issue of the sacrament of baptism, enquired what the positions of Baptist churches and the Society of Friends were.

Mr Lemopoulos, responding to Bishop Bryce, stated that an applicant church in a small nation, such as in the Pacific, but with a membership large in proportion to the national population, could seek an exemption from the 50,000 membership requirement, which presupposes a church in the context of a larger nation.

Responding to Metropolitan Gennadios, he stated that membership statistics were always problematic, as churches count their members in different ways – baptized or practicing. Membership figures given by an applicant church were verified by the relevant NCC, as it was closer to the church in question. Regarding theological criteria, the intention was to invite churches to engage in creative dialogue with one another.

Responding to Dr Kirkpatrick, he stated that the formulation on baptism did not entail recognition of other churches' baptism, but it did acknowledge the need to move towards mutual recognition; and that some in the Society of Friends did find the theological criteria too sacrament-oriented. The Council's Constitution, however, states that member churches move towards a shared eucharist. It was thus appropriate that the theological criteria should include the sacramental aspect.

Ms Idah Njobvu expressed concern about clauses 3 (b) 3 and 4 of the proposed Rule I. An exemption could be granted to some small applicant churches under Rule 3 (b) 3, but then provision was being made under Rule 3 (b) 4 for small churches that had not been granted such exemption. Was this being contradictory?

Mr Lemopoulos, responding, said that the exceptional reasons for granting exemption to small applicant churches applied, for example, to churches in small nations. Some churches could not possibly have a membership of 50,000, because they were located in a nation with a small population. It would be on such grounds that the Central Committee could grant an exemption. Rule 3 (b) 4 gave an opportunity to churches not qualifying for such exemption to participate as a member church, under two conditions.

Dr Kang Moon Kyu, with the North Korean Christian Federation in mind, asked about the definition of 'church' in the second sentence of the first paragraph. Was this sufficiently flexible?

Mr Lemopoulos, responding, stated that he believed that it was: an association, convention or federation of churches could be regarded as a

'church' for this purpose. An example was the Evangelical Church in Germany.

Metropolitan Gennadios felt that there was a danger in this possibility.

Mr Lemopoulos reassured him that it was not a case of any association, etc., being eligible, but only an association of autonomous churches.

Bishop Koppe was unhappy with the words 'as one church' in the sentence 'A group of churches within a country or region, or within the same confession, may determine to participate in the World Council of Churches as one church.' He proposed the deletion of the words 'as one church'.

7.1 (c) Proposed new Article II of the Rules

Mr Lemopoulos presented a proposed reformulation to the proposed new Article II of the Rules, which had been agreed by the Central Committee in 2003 (Minutes, p. 130). It was now felt that churches in association should make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council, and the new formulation expressed this.

7.1 (d) Addition to the Rules – Specialized Ministries

The previous meeting of the Executive Committee (Minutes, p. 62) had agreed that an appropriate category in the Rules be created to express the relationship between the WCC and the specialized ministries. It had also asked for a definition of 'specialized ministry'. As regards the definition, the background documentation for the consultation 'Ecumenism in the 21st Century', December 2004, provided an acceptable one:

A draft was presented for an additional Rule: 'Rule XIV: Specialized Ministries engaged in Ecumenical Relief and Development'.

Discussion

Dr Kirkpatrick enquired why such a rule should be limited to relief and development agencies and not include other specialist ecumenical bodies.

The General Secretary responded that such other bodies were already covered by the existing Rules.

7.1 (e) Addition to the Rules – Nominations Committee of the Central Committee

According to the Constitution and Rules (Rule V.3. (a) (2)) the Nominations Committee of the Central Committee nominates candidates for the unexpired term of the office of President should a vacancy occur between assemblies. The Executive Committee had traditionally assumed this function, without having been explicitly mandated to do so. In the process of the election of the WCC President for the North America Region, it had become necessary to clarify the situation. The Officers' Meeting in June 2004 had therefore decided to propose to the forthcoming Central Committee an addition to Rule V in order to clarify the situation.

The proposed wording for a new Rule V. 3 (c) was: 'In between Central Committees, the Executive Committee shall act as the Nominations Committee of the Central Committee.'

All the above proposed amendments and additions to the Constitution and Rules were passed to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee for consideration and recommendation.

7.2 Membership applications

7.2 (a) Member churches

The European Continental Province of the Moravian Church and the Moravian Church, British Province, both members of the World Council of Churches, had applied for joint membership as the Moravian Church, British Province, and EFBU.

7.2 (b) Associate member churches

Two Latin American churches, in each case the first church in their country to do so, had applied to be received as associate member churches belonging to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches: the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico and the Presbyterian Church of Colombia.

The above membership applications were referred to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee for consideration and recommendation.

7.2. (c) Applications still to be processed

There were four applications still to be processed, from: the Christian Pentecostal Church of Cuba; the Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim and Seraphim (Nigeria); the Union of Baptist Churches, Burundi; and Lao Evangelical Church. Mr Lemopoulos apologized for the delay in processing these applications, which had been caused by pressure on staff following the retirement of Mr van Beek and the difficulty in forming teams to visit that met the requirement of including one Orthodox member.

7.2 (d) Status of pending applications

Mr Lemopoulos gave details of 27 pending requests at various stages in the application process. He proposed that such churches whose file had been completed would be invited to send a delegated observer to the Assembly.

The matter was passed to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee for consideration and recommendation.

Discussion

Metropolitan Gennadios enquired what stage had been reached in the dialogue with the Kimbanguist Church (Minutes, p. 65-67).

Mr Lemopoulos responded that the dialogue was continuing and reaffirmed that the final date for a decision was the next Executive Committee meeting in September 2005.

8. REPORT OF THE STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Bishop Renz presented the report of the Sub-Committee.

Membership applications

8.1 Member churches

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that the Moravian Church, British Province, and the EFBU be received as a member church belonging to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches.

8.2 Associate member churches

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico and the Presbyterian Church of Colombia be received as associate

member churches belonging to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches.

8.3 Status of pending applications

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that churches whose file will have been completed be invited to send a delegated observer to the Assembly.

Amendments to the Constitution and Rules

8.4 Article II of the Constitution

The Sub-Committee had examined the proposed new wording of Article II of the Constitution:

> II. Membership
>
> Churches shall be eligible for membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches who express their agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded and satisfy such criteria as the Assembly or Central Committee may prescribe. The Central Committee shall consider applications for membership according to consensus model of decision making. The application shall be accepted for a specified interim period of participation in the work of the World Council of Churches and for interaction with the local fellowship of member churches. The member churches of the World Council of Churches shall be consulted during the interim period. Following the interim period, the Central Committee shall assess whether a consensus of member churches has developed in favour of the application, in which event the applicant church shall be considered a new member church.

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend that the Central Committee authorize the General Secretary to

send the amendment to Article II of the Constitution to the member churches prior to the Assembly and subsequently to propose it to the vote of the delegates of the Assembly (according to Article VII of the Constitution).

8.5 Article I of the Rules

The Sub-Committee had examined the wording of Article I of the Rules as adopted by the Central Committee in 2003 (Minutes, pp. 125-29) in light of the discussion in the Executive Committee and were making some changes to the original formulation. The version they were proposing to be presented to the Central Committee now read (changes in **bold**):

I. Membership in the Fellowship of the World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches is comprised of churches which have constituted the Council or which have been admitted into membership and which continue to belong to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches. The term "church" as used in this article could also include an association, convention or federation of autonomous churches. A group of churches within a country or region, or within the same confession, may determine to participate in the World Council of Churches as one **member**. Churches within the same country or region or within the same confession may apply jointly to belong to the fellowship of the Council, in order to respond to their common calling, to strengthen their joint participation and/or to satisfy the requirement of minimum size (Rule I, (3)(b) (3)). Such groupings of churches are encouraged by the World Council of Churches; each individual church within the grouping must satisfy the criteria for membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, except the requirements of size. A church seeking affiliation with a grouping of autonomous churches which is a member of the World Council of Churches must agree with the Basis and fulfil the criteria for membership.

The General Secretary shall maintain the official lists of member churches that have been accepted to belong to the fellowship of the World Council of

Churches, noting any special arrangement accepted by the Assembly or Central Committee. Separate lists shall be maintained of voting and nonvoting member churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC.

1. Application
A church that wishes to join the World Council of Churches shall apply in writing to the General Secretary.

2. Processing
The General Secretary shall submit all such applications **through the Executive Committee** to the Central Committee (see Art. II of the Constitution) together with such information as he or she considers necessary to enable the Central Committee to make a decision on the application.

3. Criteria
Churches applying to join the World Council of Churches ("applicant churches") are required first to express agreement with the Basis on which the Council is founded and confirm their commitment to the Purposes and Functions of the Council as defined in Articles I and III of the Constitution. The Basis states: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

Applicant churches should give an account of how their faith and witness relate to these norms and practices:

a) Theological
1. In its life and witness, the church professes faith in the Triune God according to the scriptures, and as this faith is reflected in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.
2. The church maintains a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel and celebrating the sacraments as understood by its doctrines.
3. The church baptizes in the name of the one God, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" and acknowledges the need to move toward the recognition of the

Baptism of other churches.
4. The church recognizes the presence and activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit outside its own boundaries and prays for the gift of God's wisdom to all in the awareness that other member churches also believe in the Holy Trinity and the saving grace of God.
5. The church recognizes in the other member churches of the WCC elements of the true church, even if it does not regard them "as churches in the true and full sense of the word". (Toronto Statement)

b) Organizational
1. The church must produce evidence of sustained autonomous life and organization.
2. The church must be able to take the decision to apply for formal membership in the WCC and continue to belong to the fellowship of the WCC without obtaining the permission of any other body or person.
3. An applicant church must ordinarily have at least fifty thousand members. The Central Committee, for exceptional reasons, may dispense with this requirement and accept a church that does not fulfill the criteria of size.
4. An applicant church with more than 10,000 members but less than 50,000 members that has not been granted **membership for exceptional reasons** under Rule I, (3) (b) (3) **(add a footnote to explain that churches who are already members are an exception to this Rule)**, but is otherwise eligible for membership can be admitted as a member subject to the following conditions: (a) it shall not have the right to vote in the Assembly, and (b) it may participate with other churches in selecting five representatives to the Central Committee in accordance with Rule III, (4) (b) (3). Such church shall be considered as a member church belonging to the fellowship of the WCC in all other respects.
5. Churches must recognize the essential interdependence of the member churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC, particularly those of the same confession, and should make every effort to practice constructive ecumenical relations with other churches within their country or region. This will normally mean that the church is a member of the national council of churches or similar body and of the regional/subregional ecumenical organization.

4. Consultation
Before admitting a church to membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, the appropriate world confessional body or bodies and national council or regional ecumenical organization shall be consulted.

5. Resignation
A church which desires to resign its membership in the fellowship of the Council can do so at any time. A church which has resigned but desires to rejoin the Council must again apply for membership.

Note: The Central Committee had already proposed to move the present **Rule 1.6. Financial participation** to the Rule on Responsibilities of membership.

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **recommended** that the Central Committee approve the above amendments to Article I of the Rules.

8.6 Article II of the Rules

The Sub-Committee had examined Article II of the Rules as adopted by the Central Committee in 2003 (Minutes, p. 130) and were proposing an amendment to Rule II (4). Discussion had concentrated on the sentence agreed by the Central Committee: '[Churches in association with the World Council of Churches] will not be obliged to contribute financial support to the work of the Council, but may do so voluntarily.' The original proposal before the Sub-Committee had been to delete that sentence and replace it with: '… Shall make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council. The amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed.' The Sub-Committee were now proposing that, instead of 'Shall make an annual contribution…', the amendment should be 'Shall be encouraged to make an annual contribution…', and that the word 'ordinarily' be inserted in the last sentence of Rule II (4).

Discussion

There was considerable discussion. Principal points made were:

- 'Shall be encouraged to make…' would be more welcoming than 'Shall make…'
- 'Shall be encouraged to make…' might inspire associate member churches to give more than the minimum.
- The insertion of the word 'ordinarily' softens the Rule and thus 'Shall make…' could be kept.
- 'Shall be encouraged…' might give the idea that the annual contribution is not important.
- Delegates would be coming to the Assembly from churches that had not made any financial contribution during the preceding eight years.

Dr Powell Jackson proposed that the Sub-Committee's proposal be amended to 'Shall be **expected** to make an annual contribution.' Bishop Renz accepted her proposal on behalf of the Sub-Committee. The General Secretary also supported Dr Powell Jackson's proposal. The final version of Rule II (4) before the Executive Committee was thus:

4) Shall be expected to make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council. The amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed. No financial support will ordinarily be made available from the Council to such churches to facilitate their participation.

The Executive Committee **agreed** that the above amendment to Article II (4) of the Rules be recommended to the Central Committee for adoption.

Bishop Koppe, stating that he preferred the formulation 'Shall make an annual contribution…', requested that his dissent from the Executive Committee's decision be recorded.

8.7 New Article XIV of the Rules

The Sub-Committee had examined the proposed new Rule XIV:

> ***"XIV. SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES ENGAGED IN ECUMENICAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT***
>
> *1. Specialized Ministries engaged in ecumenical relief and development are those church-based, church-related or ecumenical offices and organizations within the WCC membership, serving the ecumenical movement particularly in the area of world service and development.*
>
> *Any Specialized Ministry, committed to ecumenical diaconal services, may be recognized by the Central Committee as an organisation with which the World Council of Churches has working relationships, provided*
>
> *a) the organisation, knowing the Basis upon which the World Council of Churches is founded, expresses its willingness to relate to and cooperate with it; and*
> *b) the WCC member church or churches with whom the Specialized Ministry is related does not formally oppose this form of relationship.*
>
> *2. Each Specialized Ministry:*
> *a) shall be invited to send a delegated representative to the Assembly;*
> *b) shall be invited to send an adviser to meetings of the Central Committee; and*
> *c) shall be provided with copies of all general communications sent to all member churches of the World Council of Churches.*
>
> *3. In addition to communicating directly with its member churches,*

the World Council may inform each of these Specialized Ministries regarding important ecumenical developments and consult it regarding proposed World Council programmes in its area of commitment and expertise.

4. In consultation with Specialized Ministries, the Central Committee shall establish and review from time to time guidelines regarding the relationships between the World Council of Churches and Specialized Ministries."

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that the above-mentioned text for a new Rule XIV on Specialized Ministries be added to the Rules of the WCC.

[Note: If agreed by Central Committee, this will entail renumbering the following Rules, and amending the final Rule on Amendments]

8.8 New Rule V (3) (c)

The Sub-Committee had examined the proposal of the Officers.

The Sub-Committee now proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that a new Rule V. 3 (c), as follows, be added to the Rules of the WCC:

'Between meetings of the Central Committees, the Executive Committee shall act as the Nominations Committee of the Central Committee.'

[Note: If agreed by Central Committee, this will entail the deletion of Rule V. 3 (a) (2), and renumbering the following sub-clauses.]

8.9 Membership of the Central Committee

The Sub-Committee had re-examined proposals for replacements decided by earlier Executive Committee meetings (Minutes, February 2004, p. 45; and August 2004, p. 68):

Priest Andrei Eliseev, Russian Orthodox Church, to replace Mr Georgy Roschin
Rev. Lydia Veliko, United Church of Christ, to replace Dr Bernice Powell Jackson
Rev. Oscar Bolioli, Evangelical Methodist Church in Uruguay, to replace Ms Laura Saavedra
Dr Anna May Say Pa, Myanmar Baptist Convention, to replace Ms Rosebelle Thu Lay Paw (decd.).

The Sub-Committee proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that the above fill the vacancies that had occurred.

8.10 Assembly Worship Committee

The Sub-Committee had noted that the Central Committee would be notified of the membership of the Assembly Worship Committee (Minutes, February 2004, p. 47).

8.11 Religious plurality and Christian self-understanding

The Sub-Committee had further discussed the issue and proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** that it approved the course of action described.

8.12 Enhancing cooperation in the field of diakonia and development

The Sub-Committee had further discussed the issue and proposed and the Executive Committee **agreed** that it approved the course of action described.

9. STAFFING

9.1 Contract extensions and other information

The Moderator, in a closed session, invited the General Secretary to present the staffing report.

Appointment

The following appointment had already been announced but postponed up to 1 December 2004:

PROGRAMME

Justice, Peace & Creation
Ms Natalie MAXSON (Canada, United Church of Canada), Programme Executive for Youth, 4 years contract *(*à durée maximale)*, starting on 1 December 2004 up to 30 November 2008.
This appointment was already announced, but postponed up to 1 December 2004.

Contract extensions – one year

The General Secretary proposed the following contract extensions:

The following staff will have completed their first 4 years contract in 2006 ("contrat à durée maximale") and will have their period of service extension recommended for 1 year.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Rev. Sabine UDODESKU (Federal Republic of Germany, EKD, United), Executive Secretary in the General Secretariat.
Will complete 4 years on 30 April 2006.

Period of service extension for one year recommended : from 1 May 2006 to 30 April 2007.

PROGRAMME

Public Information

Rev. Olivier SCHOEPFER (Switzerland, Swiss Protestant Church Federation), Senior Web Editor.
Will complete 4 years on 31 March 2006.
Period of service extension for one year recommended : from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007.

Publications & Research

Rev. Theodore GILL (USA, Presbyterian Church (USA)), Senior Editor.
Will complete 4 years on 28 February 2006.
Period of service extension for one year recommended : from 1 March 2006 to 28 February 2007.

Publications & Research

Mr Yannick PROVOST (France, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Eastern)), Publications Manager (TC).
Will complete 4 years on 30 June 2006.
Period of service extension for one year recommended : from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007.

International Affairs

Mr Peter WEIDERUD (Sweden, Church of Sweden), Programme Executive/Director CCIA and TC.
Will complete 4 years on 31 August 2006.
Period of service extension for one year recommended : from 1 September 2006 to 31 August 2007.

Rev. Laurence BROPLEH (Liberia/US, United Methodist Church), Programme Executive UN Representative.
Will complete 2 years on 31 August 2005.
Period of service extension for one year recommended : from 1 September 2005 to 31 August 2006.

The General Secretary explained why extensions of one year only were being proposed, an explanation that he had already given to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee. It was expected that the Assembly would make decisions that would have programmatic, and therefore staffing, implications. To ensure that the new Central Committee would have the necessary flexibility after the Assembly, it was essential that contract extensions be for only one year. He had had conversions with the staff and they had been assured that there would be no drastic changes before the Assembly. All staff now being proposed for a one-year extension had been informed.

In discussion, the Executive Committee strongly supported the General Secretary's proposal and thanked him for his leadership.

The Executive Committee **authorized** the General Secretary to proceed with the above appointment and contract extensions, the legal obligations of the World Council of Churches to be binding only as from the actual signing by both parties of the corresponding contract or contract extensions.

Contract extensions – indefinite

The General Secretary also gave details of those staff members who would have completed seven years' service, or more than seven years' service, and would enter or had entered into the legal category of indefinite contracts:

Completing seven years of service in 2006

The following staff will have completed 7 years of service in 2006, and will enter into the legal category of indefinite contracts.

Their situation will be reviewed within 1 year starting from the end of their present contract.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Ecumenical Institute Bossey

Rev. Dr Faitala TALAPUSI (Samoa, Congregation Christian Church in Samoa), Lecturer.
Will complete 7 years on 30 April 2006.

PROGRAMME

Mission & Ecumenical Formation

Dr Manoj KURIAN (Malaysia, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church), Programme Executive for Health & Healing.
Will complete 7 years on 31 December 2005.

Rev. Fr Kwame LABI, (Ghana, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria & All Africa (Eastern)), Programme Executive for Urban Rural Mission.
Will complete 7 years on 31 January 2006.

Rev. Jacques MATTHEY (Switzerland, Swiss Protestant Church Federation), Programme Executive for Mission Studies, IRM.
Will complete 7 years on 31 January 2006.

Rev. Nyambura NJOROGE (Kenya, Presbyterian Church of East Africa), Programme Executive for Ecumenical Theological Education.
Will complete 7 years on 28 February 2006.

Diakonia & Solidarity

Mr Feiloakitaou TEVI (Fiji, Anglican Church of Fiji), Programme Executive for the Pacific / Consultant – re-located Pacific Office.
Will complete 6 years on 31 May 2006, including WCC Geneva and Overseas contract.

Completing more than seven years of service

The following staff will have completed more than 7 years of service and will also enter into the legal category of indefinite contracts.

Their situation will be revised within 1 year starting from the end of their present contract.

PROGRAMME

Mission & Ecumenical Formation
Rev. Simon OXLEY (UK, Baptist Union of Great Britain), Programme Executive for Ecumenical Learning.
Will complete 10 years on 30 April 2006.

International Affairs
Mr Clement JOHN (Pakistan, Church of Pakistan), Programme Executive Focus on Asia/Pacific Human Rights.
Will complete 13 years on 31 January 2006.
Up to his retirement age (65) on 1 December 2006.

MANAGEMENT

Directorate
Mr Costandi MUSTAKLEM (Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem (Eastern)), Finance Controller.
Will complete 16 years on 28 February 2006.

The situation of the two categories above would be reviewed/revised within one year starting from the end of their present contract.

The General Secretary added, for information:

Departures:
Ecumenical Institute Bossey
Rev. Dr Elizabeth TAPIA (Philippines, The United Methodist Church), Lecturer.
Will complete 4 years on 31 December 2005.

Resignation:
Diakonia & Solidarity
Middle East Office in Beirut (Lebanon)

Ms Lina MOUKHEIBER (Lebanon, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East (Eastern)), Programme Executive for the Middle East.

Retirement :
International Affairs
Mr Melaku KIFLE (Ethiopia, Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Oriental)), Programme Executive, Focus on Africa.
Will complete 26,4 years on 30 April 2006 and will also reach the age of 65 at the end of April .

Appointments:
International Affairs
Mr Rifat KASSIS (Palestine, Lutheran Church), International Coordinator & Project Manager for EAPPI, from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2006.

Diakonia & Solidarity
Middle East Desk
Mr Michel NSEIR (Lebanon, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East (Eastern)), Interim Programme Executive for the Middle East Desk, from 1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006.

Concerning vacancies he indicated that the vacancy in the post of Director, Faith and Order Commission had already been announced. He also presented for information a list of staff in role classification Leadership and Programme staff; and tables of staff by geographical origin, by confessional origin and by region and gender breakdown; and a table of staff by areas – WCC Geneva and Overseas.

9.2 Human resources management

The General Secretary informed the Executive Committee of his particular concern for the area of human resources management. That area of management requires urgent attention in order to improve efficiency and staff relations. As a part of the overall Finance and Management where internal reorganisation was being effected prior to the 9th Assembly, a realignment of responsibilities in human resources management area had become essential.

Such realignment would have staff implications including possible retrenchment. While it did not fall to the Executive Committee to take such action – it was a management matter – he was looking to the Executive Committee for an expression of support as this action was taken.

The Executive Committee expressed its strong support for the General Secretary in the action that he intended to take.

10. FINANCE – INITIAL PRESENTATION

Dr Marion Best, Vice-Moderator, presiding, invited Dr William Temu, in the absence of Bishop McKinley Young, absent through illness, and Dean/Bishop Anders Gadegaard, whose flight had been delayed, to make the initial presentation on finance.

Dr Temu presented, with comments, the Finance Overview.

Dr Lee enquired about the entry 'mutirão' in the Assembly budget.

Dr Temu responded that it was the equivalent of what had been the visitors' programme in previous assemblies, and it would be covered by visitors' contributions. The mutirão budget was intended to be balanced, but it needed to be included in the Assembly budget.

Some concern was expressed at the absence of Bishop McKinley Young (Moderator of the Finance Committee) from recent meetings of the Executive Committee.

Dr Temu, responding, said that Bishop Young was only absent from the present meeting because of illness. He was kept informed of the WCC's financial results every month. His work did involve much travelling, and when he was contacted he always provided the necessary feedback.

Dr Best undertook that the Officers would review the situation at their next meeting.

The Financial Overview was referred to the Finance Sub-Committee.

11. REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Moderator welcomed Dean Anders Gadegaard, who had now arrived, and invited him to give the Finance Sub-Committee's Report.

Dean Gadegaard presented a written report detailing preparations for the Finance Committee of the Central Committee as follows:

Agenda of the Finance Committee of the Central Committee

The Sub-committee reviewed the agenda of the Finance Committee. The Sub-committee proposed a revision of the agenda to provide additional time for review of the Pre-Assembly Programme Evaluation. The Sub-committee noted that there would require to be careful collaboration with the Programme Committee, and ensured that budget 2006 would be proposed for approval only after discussion with the Programme Committee.

Presentation of 2004 preliminary results

Preliminary results 2004 indicated that the General Reserves now reached CHF 3.4 million, increasing by CHF 1.6 million from prior year. This result is quite close to the target for the year.

The forecast drawdown of CHF 2.8 million in Restricted Funds was not achieved despite improvements in forecasting methods. The increased fund balances held as a result at the end of 2004 have consequences for budgeting and planning for both 2005 and 2006. The impact will be reviewed in the Finance Committee.

The draft balance sheet showed that current assets exceed current liabilities by CHF 4 million, an improvement of CHF 1.1 million compared with prior year.

The Sub-committee recommends that the definition of the different categories of Funds and Reserves be reviewed with the Finance Committee when the draft balance sheet is discussed.

New membership fee system

The Sub-committee heard a brief summary of staff's experience with the new membership fee system. The reaction to the membership fee system was positive with most churches considering the system fair and transparent. Although a small increase in membership income had been achieved in 2004, there was disappointment that there was a reduction in the number of churches paying membership compared with prior year.

The Sub-committee considers that the fact that membership income fails to increase significantly remains a serious issue, as does the number of churches which have failed to contribute for several years.

The Sub-committee recommends that the Finance Committee discuss how this situation might be addressed. In particular, the Finance Committee might discuss a proposal to consider no longer as members those churches which do not contribute for three years, and are not in communication with the Council on this subject over that time.

Income strategy

A brief report was made on the income development strategy. Discussion followed on setting realistic targets, supported with practical strategy on how the targets can be met.

The Sub-committee recommends that the Finance Committee consider the report carefully.

Petit-Bossey renovation

The renovation of Petit-Bossey is complete, with fundamental work having been accomplished in plumbing, electricity and flooring, as well as a general refurbishment. The total cost of the renovation including interest paid is CHF 1,018,000. A construction loan of CHF 980,000 is now to be converted to a mortgage loan. Bossey's operating results exceeded budget and forecast in 2004. The additional loan interest expense for CHF 1,000,000 borrowing is estimated at CHF 30,000. There is clear indication that further to the renovation, Bossey has capacity to generate the additional income to cover this costs. Certain other capital expenditure projects are now being put forward by Bossey, and these will be considered at the Finance Committee.

The Sub-committee recommends that the Finance Committee review Bossey's existing loan commitments and repayment schedules when considering the new capital investment projects.

Dean Gadegaard
Vice-Moderator Finance Sub-Committee

At the close of reading his report, Dean Gadegaard noted that work still needed to be done to increase the number of churches paying membership contributions, and that Bossey was able to service the loan taken out for the Petit-Bossey renovation out of its running costs, which was thus not a burden on the Council.

Discussion

There was particular concern about those churches not paying membership contributions. Principal points made were:

- 38 churches had made no membership contributions since the Harare Assembly
- They had been personally contacted, but only 11 had responded
- The personalized approach should continue, sensitively

- Churches not paying membership contributions were not eligible to receive subsidies for their delegates to the Assembly, but sensitivity was required about terminating their membership
- It was alarming that there were now more non-payers, particularly since some of them were churches that had a Central Committee member.

The Moderator thanked Dean Gadegaard for the Finance Sub-Committee Report.

12. PREPARATIONS FOR THE NINTH ASSEMBLY 2006

Mrs Justice Sophia Adinyira, Vice-Moderator, presiding, welcomed Mr Doug Chial, who was now in post as Assembly Office Coordinator in Geneva.

Mr Chial presented, for information, the Report of the Assembly Planning Committee, which had met in Porto Alegre, 9-14 November 2004, and would be presented to the following Central Committee meeting for consideration by Policy Reference Committee II.

He also presented a Report on the Assembly Business Agenda and a Report on Delegation Nominations, which required scrutiny and decisions by the Executive Committee before presentation to the Central Committee.

Assembly Business Agenda

There were proposals for forming **Assembly committees** (Business, Nominations, Policy Reference, Programme Guidelines, Public Issues, Finance, Message, and Worship). The Worship Committee was already in existence and would continue its task during the Assembly.

There were also proposals for the **size and composition of committees**. The Executive Committee, at its August 2004 meeting (Minutes, p. 40), had already proposed that Assembly committees be of a size equal to that of the

current Executive Committee (24 persons), with similar regional, confessional and gender balances.

The election procedures required particular attention. The intention was to obtain a consensus from regional meetings during the nominating process for the Central Committee. Early in the Assembly the Nominations Committee would present a draft profile of the Central Committee (distribution of seats without names) for consideration and approval by the Assembly.

Delegation nominations

There was particular concern that only 195 out of 337 member churches had responded, either naming delegates or indicating that they would do so (a 58% response). This created problems for determining the 15% balancing delegate nominations. For these 15% of delegates, appointed by the Central Committee to redress balances, 68 member churches had proposed 132 additional delegates for consideration by the Central Committee under this category. A timetable had to be established for the selection of those delegates.

There was some discussion on Assembly delegations. Principal points made were:

- it was practically impossible to determine the 15% of delegates to redress balances before the 85% of delegate nominations had been received from member churches
- some churches did not submit names for consideration for the 15% of delegates to redress balances because of the additional cost to them
- there was no deadline in the Constitution for the notification by churches of their delegate(s), but for practical reasons the deadline must be June 2005
- the coming Central Committee would provide an opportunity to remind churches of the need to form their delegations promptly
- why, in the priorities for redressing balances, was there no 'lay' category?
- In the proportion lay/ordained we were at present on target, but that could change as more nominations for the 85% are received.

These matters were referred to the Assembly Sub-Committee for consideration and recommendation.

13. REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY SUB-COMMITTEE

Metropolitan Gennadios gave a spoken report.

The Sub-Committee had examined the Report on Delegation Nominations word by word and had no changes to propose as it was passed to the Central Committee.

The Sub-Committee had also examined the Report on the Assembly Business Agenda. Concerning election of the new Central Committee they **recommended** that, as well as regional meetings, confessional meetings should be explicitly involved in the discussion on particular nominations. They also **recommended** that each confessional family should review the proposed profile of the Central Committee, as well as the member churches' proposed nominations for the Central Committee, and proposed an additional paragraph to that effect. The profile should give a proposed distribution of the 150 seats without names.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to the above recommendations.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The General Secretary gave dates of future meetings:

World Mission Conference, Athens	9-16 May 2005
Executive Committee, Geneva	13-16 September 2005
(arrivals on 12 September; departures on 17 September)	
Ninth Assembly, Porto Alegre	14-23 February 2006

There was some discussion as to the role of the Executive Committee until its role was taken over by the Assembly Business Committee on its appointment by the Assembly. Should the Executive Committee meet on the day preceding the Assembly, 13 February? The General Secretary undertook to clarify the situation.

15. CLOSING ACTIONS

The Moderator thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their attendance and attention and closed the meeting of the Executive Committee at 6.10 pm on 14 February 2005.

APPENDIX I

List of Participants

Officers:	H.H. Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia	(Moderator)
	Mrs Justice Sophia Adinyira	(Vice-Moderator)
	Dr Marion Best	(Vice-Moderator)
	Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia	(General Secretary)
Members:	Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeyev	
	Ms Donnalie E.C. Edwards-Cabey	
	Dean Anders Gadegaard	
	H.E. Metr. Dr Gennadios of Sassima	
	Ms Carmencita Karagdag	
	H.G. Archbishop Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim	
	Rev. Dr Clifton Kirkpatrick	
	Bishop Dr. Rolf Koppe	
	Rev. Septemmy E. Lakawa	
	Prof. Dr Samuel Lee	
	Rev. Dr Maake S.J. Masango	
	H.G. Archbishop Nifon of Targoviste	
	Ms Idah Njobvu	
	Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus	
Apologies:	Rev. Inamar Correa de Souza	
	Rev. Iteffa Gobena	
	Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	
	Ms Jana Krajciriková	
	Rev. Dr Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere	
	Bishop McKinley Young	
Substitute:	Mr John Doom	

Presidents:	Rt Rev. Jabez L. Bryce Dr Kang Moon Kyu Rev. Dr Bernice Powell Jackson Bishop Eberhardt Renz
Staff:	Mr Georges Lemopoulos Dr William Temu Rev. Sabine Udodesku
Minute-Writer:	Rev. Tony Coates
Administration:	Ms Ursula Zierl

APPENDIX II

Membership of Sub-Committees

Assembly
Dr Marion S. Best
Rt Rev. Jabez L. Bryce
Rev. Inamar Correa de Souza
Mr John Doom
Metr. Dr Gennadios of Sassima
(Rev. Iteffa Gobena)
Archbishop Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim
(Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky)
(Ms Jana Krajciriková)
Rev. Septemmy E. Lakawa
Rev. Dr Maake J. Masango
Rev. Dr Bernice Powell Jackson

Staffing and Nominations
Justice Sophia O.A. Adinyira
Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeyev
Ms Donnalie Edwards-Cabey
Rev. Dr Clifton Kirkpatrick
Prof. Dr Samuel Lee
Archbishop Nifon of Targoviste
Bishop Eberhardt Renz
Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus

Finance
(Bishop McKinley Young)
Dean Anders Gadegaard
Ms Carmencita Karagdag
Bishop Dr Rolf Koppe
Ms Idah Njobvu